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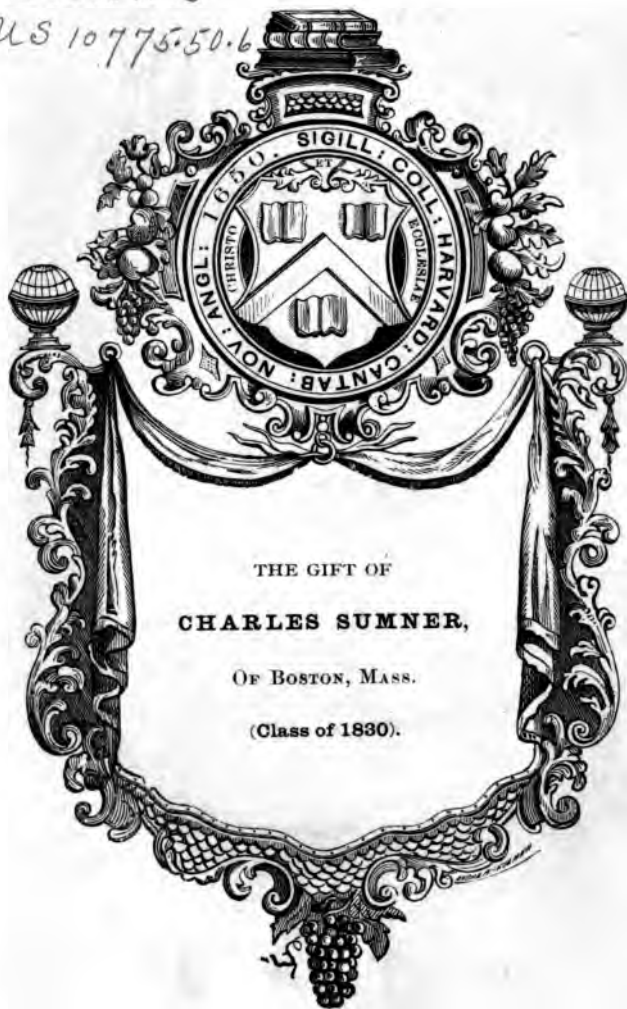
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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

ILLINOIS

State Convention of Colored Men,

ASSEMBLED AT GALESBURG,

OCTOBER 16TH, 17TH, AND 18TH.

CONTAINING

THE STATE AND NATIONAL ADDRESSES

PROMULGATED BY IT,

WITH A LIST OF THE DELEGATES COMPOSING IT.

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PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE CONVENTION.

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CHICAGO:

CHURCH, GOODMAN AND DONNELLEY, PRINTERS.

1867.

## ERRATA.

Page 3, line 8, for "was ordered" read "were ordered."

Page 14, after line 36 read

R. DeBAPTISTE,	<i>Chairman,</i>
J. B. TRUSTY,	} <i>Committee</i>
GEORGE BRENT,	
G. H. HENRY,	
R. HOLLY,	

Page 17, line 40, for "of statistics" read "statistics."

Page 20, line 9, for "people government" read "people a government."

Page 21, line 46, for "unbounded" read "unborrowed."

Page 32, line 30, for "re-uniting" read "re-writing."

Page 35, line 8, for "lore" read "love."

Page 35, line 39, for "beiter" read "better."

Page 36, line 30, for "Amrican" read "American."

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Honor. Chas. Sumner,  
of Boston.  
(16. 26. 1830.)

## PROCEEDINGS.

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PURSUANT to a widely circulated call for such an assemblage, a convention of the colored Americans of the State of Illinois, met at the city of Galesburg, on the morning of October 16th, A. D. 1866. The purpose of the body was to thoroughly canvass the subject of the disabilities, educational and political, that dwell upon persons of color in this State, impeding their rightful progress, and to devise and set in motion effective agencies for the permanent removal of the same.

The place of meeting was the lecture-room of the church of the Rev. Edward Beecher, D. D. At ten o'clock the convention was called to order by Mr. Edwin R. Williams, chairman of the Chicago delegation. At his request prayer was pronounced by the Rev. T. Strother, of Cairo. Mr. J. H. Barquette, of Galesburg, was elected temporary chairman, and Mr. Lewis B. White, of Chicago, and Rev. T. Strother, of Cairo, were elected temporary secretaries.

The call of the convention was then read by Joseph Stanley, of Chicago, as follows:

### *To the Colored Men of Illinois:*

A year ago the long and bloody war for the preservation of the Union was terminated. One of its immediate results was the abolition of slavery and the partial recognition of the rights of the colored race. That recognition, however, after a year of discussion, is as yet but partial. The question which still divides the country into two great parties is whether we shall receive, in their entirety, those rights to which we are entitled from the Legislature of the Union down to that of each State. This has been the great point of controversy. And now that we are enabled to express, more fully than ever before, our unqualified opinion about those questions which affect the entire interests of a people who have ever proved loyal to the government of their country, it has been deemed advisable to issue a call for a Convention of the colored men of this State, for the purpose of expressing their views in relation to the present condition of public affairs, and of agreeing upon a course of policy which may enhance the best interests of our people in general, and one which we can unitedly pursue, in order to obtain those God-given rights to which we are entitled, as citizens and men.

Among the questions which will receive the especial attention of the Convention will be, the best course to pursue in order to obtain equal rights for colored men, both at the *ballot-box* and in courts of justice. While relying with unwavering faith upon the genial action of the Congress of the United States, and of the people of the State of Illinois, it is necessary for us to take measures looking to the removal of such disabilities as now affect us by State laws, and without the repeal of which any favorable action on the part of Congress can be of but little avail. And of those invidious features of State legislation in regard to the colored citizen, no one more eminently demands our utmost efforts for its abolition than the proscription under which we labor, so far as educational advantages are concerned. We desire to take strong grounds, to the end that the privileges of a common school education may be shared by us in unison with others, and that we may have an opportunity of proving not only our desire, but our capacity for improvement.

We desire, too, to consider in what manner we may utterly remove those prejudices against us as a people, which still obtain in the minds of so many—prejudices which are the effect of slavery. We desire to make known to all our intention to pursue the even tenor of our way, never obtrusive nor permitting obtrusion from others; trampling on the rights of none, but defending to the uttermost those of ourselves and of our posterity.

And it will be our peculiar duty and our highest pleasure to commemorate the deeds of those colored soldiers who have proven on many a battle-field, in many a weary siege and many a toilsome march, their fitness for defenders of our Republic and for freedom most wide. Pointing to them, as we fondly do, as proof of our devotion to a country that had enslaved us and is still unkind, we will speak of them with pride and with grateful remembrance.

These are among the chief features for which we have issued this call for a State Convention of colored men, to be held on the 16th day of October next, at Galesburg, Illinois; and that there may be a thorough representation of the colored citizens of the State, we desire to impress upon their minds the importance of every city, town and village within its limits appointing delegates to represent them in the Convention.

Any further information may be had on application to the Corresponding Committee, Messrs. L. B. White, G. L. Thomas, E. R. Williams.

Cyrus Richardson, Alton.	John Jones, Chicago.
Edward White, "	G. L. Thomas, "
John J. Byrd, Cairo.	Joseph Stanley, "
T. Strother, "	John James, "
Samuel Witherspoon, Bloomington.	A. Cary, "
Bryant Smith, Shawneetown.	L. B. White, "
B. F. Rodgers, Springfield.	Wm. Baker, "
S. Donegal, "	E. Hawkins, "
Reuben Armstrong, Rockford.	R. W. Stokes, "
Wylie Walden, "	E. R. Williams, "
J. B. Finchure, Galesburg.	E. C. Freeman, "
J. H. Barquette, "	

All communications can be addressed to

LEWIS B. WHITE,  
Secretary State Central Committee, Box 764, Chicago.

A Committee on Credentials was appointed, consisting of Messrs. S. D. Williams, L. B. White, C. Richardson, A. Pleasants and E. A. Green.

A Committee on Permanent organization was created, comprising the following gentlemen; George L. Thomas, of Chicago, C. S.

Jacobs, of Decatur, B. Smith, of Shawneetown, G. W. Faulkner, of Galesburg, R. Holly, of Bloomington, J. McSmith, of Galena, J. W. Smith, of Tuscola, M. Richardson, of Mercer county, G. H. Denny, of Henry county, E. W. Lewis, of Peoria, H. Hicklin, of Springfield, J. W. Coleman, of Will county, G. T. Fountain, of Adams county, James D. Davis, of Knox county, and Wm. Baker, of Cook county.

This committee of fifteen was ordered to report at half-past two o'clock p. m.

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#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

The house was called to order at half-past two o'clock, by the chairman. Prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Patterson.

George L. Thomas, chairman of the Committee on Permanent Organization, made the following report:

For President—William Johnson, of Chicago.

“ First Vice President—E. A. Green, of Champaign City.

“ Second Vice President—C. C. Richardson, of Alton.

“ Secretary—R. C. Waring, of Chicago.

“ Assistant Secretary—T. Strother, of Cairo,

“ Treasurer—A. Pleasants, of Adams county.

“ Sergeant at Arms—J. D. Davis, of Galesburg.

The report of the committee was adopted, and the officers elect were introduced to the convention neatly and briefly by Messrs. Joseph Stanley, L. B. Trusty and M. R. Richardson. Brief and appropriate speeches were made by the retiring chairman and the President elect, and the officers entered upon the discharge of their respective duties.

On motion of E. R. Williams, all delegates present without credentials were invited to seats in the convention.

At the instance of Mr. J. H. Barquette, a call of the roll was ordered.

On motion of Rev. J. Dawson, Rev. T. Strother was appointed reporter for the “ Christian Recorder,” published at Philadelphia.

On motion of E. R. Williams, a Committee of five on Ways and Means was appointed. The chair selected Messrs. Barquette, Davis, Thomas, S. D. Williams and M. Richardson.

On motion of Mr. Barquette, a Committee of three on Printing was ordered, the chair appointing Messrs. Barquette, S. Richardson and Coleman to comprise it.

On motion of E. R. Williams, the following named gentlemen were elected a Committee on Resolutions: Messrs. Joseph Stanley, S. D. Williams, E. R. Williams, B. Smith, D. Fletcher, C. S. Jacobs and H. Hicklin.

On motion of L. B. White, it was ordered that all resolutions



presented to the convention be referred to the Committee on Resolutions, without debate.

A Committee of seven on Suffrage was, on motion of E. R. Williams, created, composed of Messrs. J. B. Dawson, C. C. Richardson, E. A. Green, G. T. Fountain, J. D. Davis, R. DeBaptiste and R. W. Stokes.

On motion of J. Stanley, a Committee of seven, to present an address on the State of the Country, was elected as follows: R. W. Stokes, of Chicago, J. B. Dawson, of Chicago, C. S. Jacobs, of Decatur, G. T. Fountain, of Quincy, J. H. Barquette, of Galesburg, M. Richardson, of Mercer county, and E. A. Green, of Champaign City.

The committee were ordered to report at three o'clock p. m., on Wednesday, 17th of October instant.

On motion of R. W. Stokes, it was ordered that a committee of five be appointed to prepare an address to the people of the State of Illinois; that they report the same to the house at two o'clock p. m., on the 17th instant; that it be made the order of the day until disposed of, and that Messrs. R. DeBaptiste, J. B. Trusty, George Brent, G. H. Henry, and R. Holly be said committee.

On motion of J. B. Dawson, Messrs. E. R. Williams and T. Strother were added to the Committee on Suffrage.

On motion of R. DeBaptiste, Messrs. Joseph Stanley, George T. Fountain, Walter Coleman, H. Hicklin and C. S. Jacobs were appointed a Committee on the Educational Statistics of the State.

On motion of J. B. Dawson, a Committee of seven on the Moral Status of the Colored People of the State, was ordered. Messrs. J. B. Dawson, R. DeBaptiste, A. Pleasants, J. W. Smith, R. B. Smith, Joseph Faulkner and George Graves were appointed said committee.

On motion of G. L. Thomas, the credentials of J. B. Smith, of Knoxville, were referred to the Committee on Credentials. That body reported favorably upon the matter referred to them, and Mr. Smith was admitted to a seat in the convention.

On motion of George L. Thomas, it was ordered that the morning sessions of the convention commence at half-past nine o'clock, and end at meridian, and that the afternoon session be from two o'clock to five o'clock.

On motion of George L. Thomas, a rule was obtained, allowing no member to speak more than twice upon the same subject, without permission from the chair.

On motion, the convention adjourned to meet at half-past nine o'clock a. m., on Wednesday, 17th.

## MORNING SESSION.

WEDNESDAY, *October 17th.*

The Convention was called to order by the President at half-past nine o'clock, and prayer was offered by the Rev. Mr. Jackson.

Doctor P. B. Randolph and A. J. Gordon, Esq., were introduced to the Convention by J. H. Barquette.

The proceedings of the previous meeting were read and approved.

On the motion of E. A. Green, George T. Fountain was elected Assistant Secretary of the Convention.

The proceedings of the meeting of Tuesday morning were read and approved.

A call of the roll was ordered.

The Committee on Credentials reported the following gentlemen as duly accredited delegates: George P. Morris, Thomas Stevenson, R. B. Catlin, George Phenix, H. H. Hawkins, C. C. Richardson, C. Barbour, Philander Outland.

The Committee on Educational Statistics, through their chairman, Joseph Stanley, made the annexed report, which was adopted.

## ADDRESS FROM THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

FELLOW CITIZENS OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS,—Among the great questions which claim our special consideration, is that of education. The past and present history of our native country, as well as of all other countries which have attained to any degree of greatness, has proven that, without education, they are lost to virtue, intelligence, and to that usefulness which have made a people great, good, happy, and contented.

If a nation, republican in form, loses her virtue, she can no longer claim prestige with her sister republics. The same is with communities and individuals.

What is it that makes a nation, a people, a community, or even an individual, great, good, and happy? It is a pure, unsullied love of virtue! And how shall this virtue be obtained, so as to become beneficial to all, irrespective of color or condition?

Judging from the past and looking at the present, we can see, through the dim vista, the future of a race of people, who are giants in intellect, whose energies have been crushed by the power of might—a people claiming the admiration of men and angels, still entreating you, by all that is patriotic in government and sacred in religion, to be the witness of what they will do to establish their claim to be recognized as men worthy of a chance in this your noble State, to earn their bread, to educate themselves and their children—a people full of love and humanity, ever ready to yield to those christian impulses and feelings which characterize those whom God has chosen for his elect from all eternity. Such characteristics must eventually have their reward; such virtues must ever live. And, as a part of that race, living in your midst, tilling your soil, loading your ships, and by our labor enriching you—willing to forget that you have oppressed, trampled us under foot, shot us down like dogs, treated us as beasts of burden, having watered the soil of our fair country with the blood of our fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters—still, we feel it to be our duty to show, not only to the people of the State of Illinois, but to the nation, that we are men and American citizens; that we desire to acquire all your virtues, shunning every evil calculated to retard our moral, physical, and social condition. To do this, we ask you, in the name of twenty-two thousand colored

citizens of the State, to open wide your doors, and admit our children into your public schools and colleges. We appeal to you, in behalf of eight thousand colored boys and girls, with expansive minds, ready and willing to drink from the fountain of literature and learning.

Slaves, many of us have been ; but if you give us those advantages which the Constitution guarantees to all citizens, we shall soon rise in the scale of being so high that it will blush the cheek of many who have spent their golden moments at the shrine of vice and infamy.

Looking at the educational statistics of our State, we find less than one hundred of our colored children in public schools, or less than one in every eighty. How long shall such a state of things exist ; how long will you encourage pauperism, and charge us with having minds not susceptible of culture. Your legislature, less than two years ago, wiped from the escutcheon of our great and noble State, a part of her black code.

Three years ago, you took from your midst twenty-five hundred true and loyal blacks, to help fill up your quota. and your generals led them to a scene of carnage and death. As men and soldiers of Illinois they fought ; as American citizens they died, defending the honor of the State and the government. Believing that the State, the government, and the entire people, irrespective of all political differences, would honor their memory by doing justice in the education of their children, the protection of their widows and orphans, and proving to the world that the genius of the American people is liberty unproscribed to all. How can you hope for success in the establishment of the government on the eternal foundation on which your fathers built, if you persist in denying an education to a persecuted race. This is a world of compensations, and he who would himself be great through the means of education, must not enslave the mind of his fellow-being. Then, fellow citizens, accept the aphorism, and enlarge upon it : say that, as the colored man is now free, he may live a better patriot, a better man and a better christian.

JOSEPH STANLEY,

*Chairman of Com. on Education.*

GEO. T. FOUNTAIN, ADAMS Co.

WALTER COLEMAN, WILL "

C. S. JACOBS, MERCER "

H. HICKLIN, SANGAMON "

The Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions, J. Stanley, made, on behalf of that body, the following report, which was adopted.

#### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS.

WHEREAS, Taxation without representation is contrary to the genius and spirit of our republican institutions, and

WHEREAS, The colored people of the State of Illinois are taxed for the support of the public schools, and denied, by the laws of the State, the right of sending their children to said schools, therefore,

*Resolved*, That we regard it as a gross usurpation, unjustly shown toward the colored citizens of Illinois, and that this Convention do hereby recommend to the colored people of the State to send their petitions to our legislature, asking for the repeal of said law.

*Resolved*, That our State legislature, having ratified the amendment to the Constitution of the United States, abolishing slavery, and repealing a part of her black code, giving to colored men the right to *testify in the courts of justice*, must be regarded as still remiss in her duty, until she educates the children of three thousand colored men who helped to fill the quota of the State.

*Resolved*, That to deprive us and our children of this invaluable right (honorably and patriotically defended by the blood of our fathers, brothers and sons), is treating us with wrong and cruel injustice, unheard of in any civilized land or country whose government, national or State, have received the services of black soldiers in defending the liberties of the entire people.

*Resolved*, That in view of the services rendered by the loyal and patriotic black men of the State of Illinois, during the war which has just ended, wiping from our national escutcheon the foul stain of slavery, that we ask the legislature to give us the free exercise of our inherent right, namely, the elective franchise.

*Resolved*, That the constitutional disability under which colored men labor in this State, calls loudly for redress ; it insults our manhood, and disgraces the name of our great State.

*Resolved*, That, in spite of every opposition, we recommend to our people the propriety of getting an interest in the soil, believing that there is power in so doing : moreover, to cultivate and improve the same is one of the great means of elevating ourselves and every disfranchised American.

*Resolved*, That we believe the times require an earnest co-operation of the colored citizens throughout the State, in securing a recognition of our rights, as men and citizens, by the next legislature, and that we will unite our efforts with those of our brethren elsewhere in securing the aforesaid end.

*Resolved*, That we believe that, under our present form of government, no man is secure in his life, liberty, or property, while he is deprived of the elective franchise.

*Resolved*, That, as the government called upon us to help defend it in the hour of danger, and thus recognized us as citizens of the republic, it should now give to us the right of the ballot box, for the protection of ourselves and families ; and that we will not cease to agitate the question, until we shall have been recognized in law as the equals of every American citizen.

*Resolved*, That among the means to be adopted by the colored people of Illinois, for insuring confidence from their white fellow citizens, is to form themselves into stock associations, for raising cattle of all kinds, thereby proving that we have the same pride and taste in enhancing the farming interests of the State, as those who have, and are still laboring for her future aggrandizement.

*Resolved*, That our efforts for the achievement of the suffrage question, the admission of our children into public schools, the acquirement of lands, and the raising of stock shall be unceasing ; that we feel our manhood, and must exercise it on every occasion, until we are satisfied that the prejudice which now exists against us is done away, and that we shall be treated as men and brethren throughout the State.

*Resolved*, That as a people whose characteristics are religious, we will continue to preach and pray, and, if necessary, fight against all laws making a difference on account of color, either in Church or State.

*Resolved*, That we do not ask our white friends to elevate us, but only desire them to give us the same opportunities of elevating ourselves, by admitting us to the right of franchise, and an equal chance for educating ourselves, by opening the doors of their free schools and colleges.

J. STANLEY, COOK CO.  
E. R. WILLIAMS, COOK CO.  
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On the motion of Rev. R. DeBaptiste, Dr. P. B. Randolph and Mr. A. J. Gordon were invited to participate in the proceedings of the Convention this p. m., and in the general speaking of the body this evening.

On the motion of James D. Davis, "that a book of subscription to a joint stock company be opened this afternoon," the Convention voted affirmatively.

On the motion R. DeBaptiste, Messrs. L. B. White, Joseph Stanley and G. P. Morris, were appointed a committee to report the proceedings of the Convention to the public journals.

The Convention adjourned to meet at two o'clock p. m.

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#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Convention was called to order at two o'clock.

The proceedings of the morning session were read and approved.

The resignation of J. Stanley of his membership of the reporting Committee, was offered and accepted by the Convention.

On the motion of R. C. Waring, George L. Thomas was appointed to fill the vacancy thus created.

The Committee on Credentials reported S. R. Smith as a duly accredited delegate from Knoxville, and he was thereupon admitted to a seat in the Convention.

The Committee on the address to the people of the State of Illinois, made, through their Chairman, Rev. R. De Baptiste, the following report, which, after brief speeches in its support, was adopted.

### AN ADDRESS

TO THE

PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS.

FELLOW CITIZENS OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS:

As a part of the people of this great and prosperous commonwealth, we have assembled in Convention for the purpose of considering such matters as relate to our intellectual, moral and social prosperity. And we wish, by a calm and judicious discussion of the questions that are intimately connected with our most vital interests, even our rights of liberty and the pursuit of happiness, to arrive at such conclusions as will convince all of the justice of our cause and the reasonableness of our demands.

Receiving, as conclusive upon that question, the legal decisions of the highest authority known in the nation, including the judicial, the legislative and the executive departments of its government, we are citizens of the State of Illinois. And yet, strange and *anomalous as it is*, we are *disfranchised* in the State of our residence,

without the commission of any crime by ourselves, as a reason for our disfranchisement.

Therefore we address you, but not for the purpose of intruding upon you, in this address, our opinions on the question of the reconstruction of the rebel States' Governments into the Republic again, but we address you upon "the subject of State legislation, which immediately effects and controls the most important rights of the citizens." In the exercise of the commonest right known to man,—the right of habitation,—we have chosen this State as our dwelling place—our home.

Here many of us have purchased lands upon which we have settled, and by the cultivation of the soil we propose to gain an honest livelihood, and add to the material wealth of our adopted State. Others of us have invested our means in the different branches of mechanical trades and commercial pursuits, while yet others are engaged in useful industrial occupations, by means of which to maintain themselves and those dependent upon them, to acquire property, and accumulate wealth. Having established our family altars upon this soil, here erected our churches for worship, and our houses for habitation, we propose to pursue our callings, serve our God, our country, and our State. Our purpose is to be intelligent, loyal, and peaceable citizens of the State, and to maintain such a standing among the rest of our fellow-citizens as will command their respect. To attain to this end we require the same means in its accomplishment as do others; we need the same immunities and privileges that are accorded to others. To become intelligent and useful citizens our youth need the same free and unrestricted common school privileges that *others have*, but which *at present they have not*, except in a few particular localities, that renders this great privilege—very justly esteemed as the pride of our civilization and christian sentiment—by no means general and free to us.

We wish to call your attention to Section 80 of "An Act to establish and maintain a system of free schools in the State of Illinois, as amended February 16th, 1865," which reads as follows: "In townships in which there shall be persons of color, the board of trustees shall allow such persons a portion of the school fund equal to the amount of taxes collected for school purposes from such persons of color in their respective townships."

Here under the specious pretence of "establishing schools for persons of color," we are in reality cut off from the common school privileges of the State. No portion of the funds derived from the sale of school lands granted by the National Government for common school purposes, or that derived from other sources of school revenue, except that of direct tax, is to be given to "such persons." And even the "portion" "of taxes collected for school purposes" "the board of trustees shall allow such persons" is so

carefully guarded, and so adroitly set apart, as *not to be* in "amount in proportion to the number of children under twenty-one years of age," as is the case with others. No provision is made for school houses, or the management of such schools, or, in short, any thing that is necessary to "*free schools*."

Thus it is that the colored citizens of this great State, that prides itself on its "system of free schools," must, under the present partial and unjust enactment, submit to see their children driven from the well organized and ably conducted schools in the districts where they reside, for no other delinquency than the crime of being created with a darker skin than their neighbors. What an insult to Him who "hath made of one blood all nations of men."

We protest that this is an unjust and unchristian discrimination against a portion of your loyal citizens, and appeal to you to remedy what is equally a reflection upon your sense of justice and christian principle, as it is an injury to us, by taking out of the school laws of the State all discriminations on account of color or race, and give to all the people the benefit in common of the free schools.

The citizens of every free and enlightened government have accorded to them the right of jury trial, before a jury composed of their "peers," whenever their rights of person, or property are brought in question before a court of justice. And where is the American citizen who does not deem this very sacred and time-honored right an essential part of his citizenship? Certainly there is not one to be found. But by the laws of this State, that portion of its citizens who are not white are debarred, even in the most petty case, the right to sit as a juror in any of its legal tribunals. So that no colored citizen of the State of Illinois whose life, reputation or property may be on trial in its courts, can have the reasonable privilege or right to be confronted by a jury composed either wholly or in part, of his equals, in the persons of his colored fellow-citizens.

The right to sit in the jury box, in common with other citizens of the State, we deem essential to our full citizenship. Necessary it is, in many instances, to insure us a fair and impartial trial; and yet more necessary do we regard its possession in order to vindicate our character against the unfair aspersion with which the withholding of it assails us.

Therefore, we call upon you to demand of our legislature to so amend the statutes of the State, that the humblest of its citizens may be assured of a fair and impartial jury trial, by removing the bar that now shuts out from a seat upon the jury, every honest and intelligent citizen who is not a white man.

We require these rights at your hands, because we believe every American citizen in each State to be entitled to equal rights before the law; that the Constitution of the United States contemplates as much, when it says: "The citizens of each State shall be enti-

tled to *all* the privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States." That the "Civil Rights Bill," recently passed by more than a two-thirds majority through both houses of Congress, is designed to enforce this principle, and secure these "privileges and immunities" to all alike. Therefore, we ask of you that they be restored to us, by an expression of your consent, through the ballot-box, since we should be no longer deprived of them.

There is yet one more question to which we wish to call your attention, and that is the most important of them all, as it is the only safeguard to those we have already named, and all other rights of the citizens. We refer to the *elective franchise*, or the right to vote. We wish to have a voice in the government which "derives its just powers from the consent of the governed." By the Constitution of the State of Illinois, the elective franchise is restricted to its "white male citizens" who are twenty-one years of age, and in consequence of this, the colored citizens of the State are deprived of the right to vote. This feature of the organic law of the State is at war with the fundamental principles of this and all other truly democratic governments. Foremost among these principles is the one often repeated, but none the less forcible, since it is moved by the power of eternal truth: that taxation and representation are inseparable.

It is inconsistent with the Federal Constitution, which declares that "the United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government." And we protest to you that that is not a republican government, that constitutes a governing class or caste of a *portion* of its citizens, on account of the complexion of their skin. An aristocracy of race or color is as repugnant to the principles of republicanism, as one of birth or wealth would be.

Again, the system of restricting suffrage to the whites only, gives countenance to that wicked, pernicious, and false doctrine, that has arisen since the days of Washington and Jefferson, and which is at present openly preached by some, and secretly cherished by more, that "this is a white man's government." This injurious and undemocratic sentiment is elevated to a degree of respectability, and its advocates furnished with a pretext upon which to predicate a sort of consistency, when they are backed up by the unjust political discrimination of which we complain, and by which a whole race are debarred from all participation in the government, upon no other ground than that they are not, and cannot be, "white male citizens." We have characterized this doctrine as false, because the wise men who established this republic did not hold any such doctrine; and if they did entertain such sentiments at all, they were wise enough, and careful enough, in the performance of the grand and noble work that fell to their lot, to rise above their prejudices, and, as if guided by an inspiration scarcely less than



divine, gave to their children, for generations yet unborn, a Declaration of Independence, and a Constitution for the United States, without a trace of such a weakness, without the stain of such an iniquity, that know no white man, no black man; but embrace in their God-like fold "ALL MEN," and are for the "PEOPLE."

In many of the States, free colored citizens voted for the adoption of the Federal Constitution, at the same ballot box, and in common with their white fellow-citizens, which circumstance furnishes that noble document with a commentary at once truthful and reliable, defying alike the sophistry of ambitious and unreliable politicians, and the preconceived opinions of unjust judges; and setting forth in the clearest light, so that he that runs can read, the meaning of that broad and just expression, "We, the PEOPLE of the United States, in order to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this CONSTITUTION." This is not, then, by the intention of its founders, simply a white man's Government, and those who labor to make it such, because they are in the majority, pervert it from the high purpose for which it was established,—to "secure the blessings of liberty" to all its people; and all legislation, whether State or National, that gives countenance to such a perversion, and encourages those who are laboring to accomplish it, shows a recreancy to the trust imposed upon their posterity by the fathers, and a departure from the faith which they proclaimed, "That all men are created equal."

Therefore we hope that the Constitution of our State will be amended by striking out the word "white," so that it will accord with the Constitution of the United States, making no distinction among its citizens on account of their complexion, but "promoting the general welfare and securing the blessings of liberty" equally to all.

This, though strong, is not the only ground upon which we predicate our title to the elective franchise. We have claims to the right of suffrage, which we urge upon your consideration; and such too as, if they were presented by any other class of our fellow citizens, would ensure to them that right, the dearest and most sacred to the American citizen—to have a voice in the selection of those who are to make and execute the laws by which he is to be governed.

We are native American citizens "to the manor born," and have never known allegiance to any other flag than "The Star Spangled Banner," which to-day waves more proudly and gloriously than when it was first thrown to the breeze of heaven. That flag our Fathers, with yours, made sacred by sprinkling its altar with their life's most precious blood, during the ordeal through which it passed in the "times that tried men's souls," in the Revolutionary war. That our fathers served their country in the war of Independence, *and made* "excellent soldiers," remarkable for their bravery, as well

as "distinguished for their soldierly appearance," there are abundant historical proofs found upon the records of all the Northern and some of the Southern States during that period. In the secret journal of the old Congress, Vol. 1, pp. 105-107, the following record occurs: "On the 17th of March, 1779, it was recommended by Congress, to the States of Georgia and South Carolina, to raise 3,000 colored troops, who were to be rewarded for their services by their freedom. The delegations from those States informed Congress that such a body of troops would be not only formidable to the enemy, but would lessen the danger of 'revolts and desertions' among the slaves themselves."

When British temerity insulted the dignity of our flag in the war of 1812, and defied its resistance to their encroachments, the colored citizens of the Republic came forward at the call of their country, to defend its flag against the invading foe. General Jackson addressed them as "fellow citizens" with the whites, and said, "as sons of freedom you are called upon to defend our most inestimable blessing. As Americans, your country looks with confidence to her adopted children for a valorous support, as a faithful return for the advantages enjoyed under her mild and equitable Government. As fathers, husbands, and brothers, you are summoned to rally round the standard of the eagle to defend all that is dear in existence. Your country, although calling for your exertions, does not wish you to engage in the cause without remunerating you for the services rendered. *Your intelligent minds are not to be led away by false representations. Your love of honor would cause you to despise the man who would attempt to deceive you.* In the sincerity of a soldier and the language of truth I address you."

The Hon. Mr. Clarke in the Convention which revised the Constitution of the State of New York in 1821, said in regard to the right of suffrage for colored men, "In the war of the Revolution these people helped to fight your battles by land and by sea.

"Some of your states were glad to turn out corps of colored men, and to stand shoulder to shoulder with them. In your late war (1812) they contributed largely towards your most splendid victories. On Lakes Erie and Champlain, where your fleets triumphed over a foe superior in numbers and engines of death, they were manned in a large proportion with men of color!"

In the late rebellion, which has been so recently subdued, and whose smouldering embers are yet threatening with danger the peace and prosperity of the country, colored men, without exception, either North or South, ranged themselves on the side of the old flag; and when called upon by our worthy Governor in this State, we flocked to its standard and bore it in triumph in the face of its rebel foes to certain victory. We offered our lives to defend it and redeem it from the sin of slavery and the curse of rebellion. Our blood was freely contributed to the red sea that deluged this

land, drawn from patriot veins by the instruments of death in the hands of its enemies. Our sons and brothers suffered starvation with yours in the loathsome prisons of a barbarous foe. Our slain sleep to-day with yours on the battle-fields of the wicked rebellion, having given their lives, their all, in defence of their country and its liberties.

"And are we to be thus looked to for help in the 'hour of danger,' but trampled under foot in the hour of peace?" Are we to contribute our blood and treasure to support and defend the government when threatened with destruction, and yet to be denied all participation in its management when the crisis is passed and the issue is settled? If so, what shall we say of the justice and magnanimity of the white Americans: that it is clean gone forever? We believe better things of them, and shall still hope on for impartial justice to be meted out to us. If a residence in this country that antedates the organization of the government in its duration, is long enough to entitle to vote, then it is ours by right. If a loyalty, tried, unswerving and well attested at all times, commands your admiration and gratitude, and entitles those who possess it to a voice in the government, then we present the same, and why should it be longer withheld from us? In short, there are no claims that can be presented, or arguments that can be urged in behalf of other American citizens, to insure them a right to vote, that we do not present, except the all-powerful one that we are white men.

From the genius of our government, from the considerations of consistency, from the scars of war and the proofs of loyalty, aye, from our very birth-right as American citizens, we appeal to you for impartial justice, for equal political and civil rights with our fellow-citizens in this State.

With our whole hearts we endorse the following noble sentiment uttered by the Hon. Horace Maynard, of Tennessee, and which, with much propriety, may be said to be "the Word for the Hour:"  
*"Let our laws and institutions speak not of white men, not of black men, not of men of any race or complexion, but like the laws of God, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer, let them speak of PEOPLE."*

After the adoption of the report the Convention was addressed at length by Doctor P. B. Randolph, of Louisiana. Mr. J. H. Barquette introduced to the Convention Rev. Dr. Edward Beecher, by whom the body was briefly and pertinently addressed.

On the motion of J. H. Barquette the Convention tendered a unanimous vote of thanks to Rev. Dr. Beecher and Dr. Randolph, for the remarks made by them before it.

The Chairman of the Committee on the state of the country, R. W. Stokes, by direction of that body, made its report which was received.

On the motion of Rev. R. De Baptiste, the adoption of the report was made the special order of business for this evening.

On motion the Convention adjourned, to meet at half-past seven o'clock this evening.

#### EVENING SESSION.

The Convention was called to order at half-past seven o'clock.

Prayer was pronounced by Rev. T. Strother.

On the motion of E. R. Williams, the Committee on printing were ordered to procure fifty-five copies of the Chicago "Tribune," and a like number of the Galesburg "Free Press," for the use of members of the Convention.

The address reported from the Committee on the State of the Country, the adoption of which had been made the special order, was next considered.

The measure elicited considerable discussion.

On the motion of E. R. Williams, the address was referred back to the Committee reporting it, for condensation.

Mr. A. J. Gordon, on being called, addressed the Convention at some length.

On motion the Convention adjourned to meet at half-past nine o'clock on Thursday morning, October 18th.

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#### THIRD DAY, Thursday, Oct. 18th.

#### MORNING SESSION.

The Convention was called to order at half past nine o'clock by the President. The opening prayer was made by Rev. Mr. Faulkner.

The following telegram from the Convention of Men of Color, in session at Albany, New York, was received, and communicated to the Convention:

*"To President and Committee of Colored Convention:*

*"Over one hundred (100) delegates in convention greet you, and pledge coöperation in your and our work.*

*"M. B. CASS, WM. RICH,  
J. W. LOGUEN, WM. HOWARD DAY. } Com.*

The despatch was most cordially received, and the Convention created Messrs. Wm. Johnson, President of the Convention, R. O. Waring, and L. B. White, a Committee to return a reply to it.

The proceedings of the afternoon session of Wednesday, October 17th, were read and approved.

The Committee on Credentials reported the names of Tilford Richardson and Joseph Perkins as duly authorized delegates, and they were thereupon admitted to seats in the Convention.

On motion, Mr. A. W. Jackson was admitted to a seat in the Convention.

The Committee on replying to the Albany telegram reported the following, which was approved, and ordered to be forwarded :

*" To the Officers and Members of the New York State Convention of Colored Men :*

*" Illinois, through fifty six (56) delegates assembled, sends greeting, and joins in the onward march to freedom and equality.*

*" WM. JOHNSON, }  
L. B. WHITE, } Com."  
R. C. WARING. }*

On the motion of C. Barbour, the Convention suspended the rule to adjourn at twelve o'clock m., and ordered a continuance of the session until five o'clock p.m.

The chairman of the Committee on Suffrage, Mr. E. R. Williams, made a report from that body, which, on motion, was received :

#### REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON SUFFRAGE.

The time has come for action. He that would be free, himself must strike the blow.

In times like these, when the public mind is being absorbed in deep thought concerning the welfare of the country, which has just passed through one of the most terrific struggles that ever befell a civilized government, and our loyalty to the government during that struggle was such that should entitle us to all the rights, privileges, and immunities in common with other American citizens ; and it is right, and important as it is right, that colored people who live in the State of Illinois and the United States, should understand and know from the past how to appreciate the great value of liberty, and all its blessings, and cause them to use every means in their power for the purpose of educating the masses up to the full height of our situation ; and that we should never remain contented until we have obtained all the rights enjoyed by other men.

And for the purpose of obtaining these great privileges, of which we are so unjustly deprived, we, your Committee would recommend the following plan as a basis of operation to be adopted by this Convention.

1st. That there shall be a State Central Suffrage Committee, consisting of thirteen members—one from each congressional district, and a general agent for the State at large, all to be elected by this Convention.

2d. It shall be the duty of the State Central Committee to adopt such measures as will enable them successfully to accomplish the great objects set forth in the address.

3rd. Upon the election of the said Committee, they shall immediately proceed to organize for action by electing the following officers : viz, President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

4th. The duties of the General Agent shall be, to canvass the State, form auxiliary Leagues, circulate petitions and urge the people to action, and collect such moneys as he may be able from time to time, and pay the same to the treasurer of the said State Central Committee, and to perform such other duties as may be required in the accomplishment of the great objects for which they were appointed ; and for such services rendered, he shall be paid, from the State treasury, the sum of ——— dollars, and traveling expenses.

It shall also be the duty of the State Central Committee to fill all vacancies that may occur during the time for which they are elected. Moreover, the said State Central Committee and General Agent shall be elected by annual

State Conventions, held on or about the twenty-second day of September of each year, at such places as the Convention may hereafter determine, the said Conventions to be composed of delegates from the various Suffrage Leagues of the State.

E. R. WILLIAMS,	C. RICHARDSON,	J. D. DAVIS,
J. B. DAWSON,	E. A. GREEN,	R. W. STOKES,
R. DEBAPTIST,	GEO. T. FOUNTAIN,	T. STROTHER.

On the motion to adopt, Mr. L. B. White moved that the last clause of the report be so amended as not to make it obligatory to summon a Convention *annually*, but to leave the calling of such an assembly discretionary with the Central Committee. The amendment prevailed, and on the motion to adopt the report as amended, the House recorded an affirmative vote.

A communication of a suggestive nature, by a friend to rightful human progress, was received from Muscatine, Iowa, and laid on the table for future action. Its *animus* was competent to have secured for it a careful canvass by the Convention; but the accumulated unfinished business of the body, in view of the impending final adjournment, precluded the consideration of the propositions presented in it.

On the prevailing motion of L. B. White, that the Chair appoint a committee of nine, to nominate candidates for the State Central Committee, the following gentlemen were assigned to that duty by the President: Wm. Baker, C. C. Richardson, Rev. Bryant Smith, M. Richardson, G. Brent, W. Coleman, E. A. Green, Philander Outland, G. T. Fountain.

On motion, the Committee were requested to report at two o'clock p.m.

The Convention voted a recess of thirty minutes.

On the re-assembling of the house, the Committee on the Moral *Status* of the colored people of the State, made, through their chairman, Rev. J. B. Dawson, the annexed report, which was adopted:

#### REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON MORAL STATUS.

Your Committee on the Moral *Status* of the colored people of this State respectfully report as follows:

We are fully persuaded that the morals of a people are very closely connected with their permanent prosperity, and are impressed with the fact, that those who disregard the laws of this part of our complex nature can never hope to be either great or prosperous; and it is with pleasure that we present the following of statistics, as an indication of the moral *status* of the colored people in the State Illinois. There are, among the colored people of this State, forty churches, whose church property is valued at one hundred thousand dollars. The number of members in these churches is about five thousand. Ministers of the gospel, ordained and licensed, about eighty. Sabbath schools, about forty; Sabbath school scholars, three thousand. All of which we respectfully submit,

J. B. DAWSON,	R. DEBAPTISTE,	} Committee.
J. W. FALKNER,	A. PLEASANTS,	
J. McSMITH,	J. W. SMITH.	

On the motion of Joseph Stanley, that a committee of five be appointed to revise and publish the proceedings of the Convention, the following gentlemen were created such committee: Joseph Stanley, L. B. White, R. C. Waring, Wm. Johnson, E. R. Williams.

On the motion of George P. Morris, it was ordered that the printing be done in Chicago.

On the motion of C. S. Jacobs, it was ordered that the proceedings of the Convention be published in pamphlet form, to the number of from five hundred (500) to one thousand copies (1,000) copies, at the discretion of the Publishing Committee.

On the motion of George L. Thomas, the members of the Convention were assessed one dollar each, to constitute a fund for the payment of the expenses of the body.

### FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

The Committee on Ways and Means reported as follows:

DR.			
October 16.	To Cash collection.....		\$4 46
" 17.	" " .....		3 71
" 18.	" from assessment of delegates at one dollar each		56 00
Total cash receipts .....			\$64 17
CR.			
October 18.	By Cash paid for printing.....		\$3 50
" 18.	" " 52 copies of "Free Press" .....		2 60
" 18.	" " Rent of hall.....		20 00
" 18.	" " Stationery, to S. D. Williams.....		0 90
" 18.	" " Posting bills .....		0 50
November 14.	" " Paper for revising Min. (by R. C. Waring)		0 50
			\$28 00
Balance.....			36 17

The chairman of the Committee on the nomination of candidates for State Central Committee reported the names of the following gentlemen: William Johnson, Joseph Stanley, L. B. White, Chicago; George T. Fountain, Quincy; H. Hicklin, Springfield; C. C. Richardson, Alton; S. D. Williams, Galesburg; E. A. Green, Champaign City; C. S. Jacobs, Decatur; Rev. B. Smith, Shawneetown; A. Hill, Joliet; G. P. Morris, Monmouth; G. Ellis, Cairo.

On the motion to create these gentlemen the State Central Committee, the Convention recorded an affirmative vote.

The chairman of the Committee on Resolutions reported the following resolution of Mr. R. W. Stokes, which, on motion, was adopted:

*Resolved*, That in view of the great interests involved in the pending political contest in our country, and the desirableness of our being united upon a course of action for the securement of all our rights as American citizens, the State Central Committee created by this House be, and they are hereby instructed

to correspond with all other colored State Central Committees, as to the propriety of, time, and place for holding a *Congress* of colored men, representing all parts of the country.

On the motion of J. Stanley, "That this Convention tender a vote of thanks to the citizens of Galesburg for the courtesy exhibited to its members while in their beautiful city, than which we know of no place where there has been so little prejudice shown to colored men — this glorious city of colleges and churches," the house gave a unanimous affirmative vote.

The chairman of the Committee on the State of the Country, R. W. Stokes, under the direction of that body, reported back, in its original form, the Address to the People of the United States, which, by an order of the Convention, had been recommitted for abridgment. Briefly recapitulating the scope and purpose of the Address, the previous question was called by him, and under its operation the Address was adopted.

Upon its original presentment to the house, the chairman of the Committee said :

MR. PRESIDENT, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION,—To stand in the collective presence of a thousand intelligences, and utter "right words" before them, is a work which only the learned and experienced can reasonably hope successfully to achieve. To address the entire sovereignty of a State of the American Union, is a task of still profounder difficulty of performance. But when we address a great nation of thirty millions of people, we have the whole earth for our auditorium, and civilized humanity every where for our eventual hearers. At the threshold of such an audience-chamber, the wisest may well pause, ere entering upon the view of tens of thousands of intelligences, all direct emanations from the grand over-soul Himself. In obedience to the law of circumstances, however, there sometimes devolve upon men duties — solemn duties — the performance of which it were unmanly to even seek to evade. Pursuant, therefore, to the decision of the Committee on the State of the Country, of which I have the honor to be a member, I beg leave to submit the Address, which they have instructed me to report :

## ADDRESS

OF THE

### ILLINOIS CONVENTION OF COLORED MEN TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

FELLOW CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES, LEND US YOUR EARS.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed."



Such were the principles enunciated by the patriot fathers of American nationality, and under their inspiration they waged the war of independence against the domination of the mother country, which culminated in the formation of the great political community named the United States of North America. The intelligence of mankind will bear us witness, upon a review of the national history, that had these fundamental principles—emanations, as they are, from the eternal verities—been permitted to imbue the life and control the action of the people government of the nation, it would have been spared the inestimable loss of the precious lives of half a million of men, and the taxing the industry of the country to the extent of three thousand millions of money.

To-day we face a prospect, to properly appreciate which recourse may suitably be had to retrospection.

The *animus* residing in, and the complications arising out of, the existing atrocious rebellion (“*existing*,” because, though as a physical entity it has been conquered by cannon, its spirit, intensified in venom by defeat, permeates the quarter once dominated by it; and is seeking, through ten thousand agencies, political, moral, and physical, to regain in the forum what it lost in the field)—a rebellion for magnitude of extent and wickedness of incentive without historic parallel—have eventuated in the advancement of human liberty on this continent.

Candor, *pur et simple*, compels the admission, that this conclusion is due as much, or more, to the obstinacy of the rebellious power—an obstinacy born of infatuation—than to the existence in the Northern people and government of a disposition to discern and accept the fitness of things as seen in the light of the justice of God.

Born of resistance to tyranny, and taking her place as one of the family of nations upon the great democratic idea of the natural equality of rights of all men, America has, since the commencement of her national life, been vainly endeavoring to render homogeneous two actively opposing and wholly irreconcilable principles—right and wrong; freedom and slavery! This compromise with wrong seems to have been made by the fathers of American liberty, to whom it was a confessed anomaly in their system of government, in the belief that the wrong principle thus admitted to a co-partnership with the right would soon be eliminated by it. But the progress of events demonstrated the impolicy of nations or men doing evil that good may come, for the wrong principle became a colossal agent of political power in the general State, and the ever fruitful cause of sectional dissensions in the nation. Essentially aggressive, the slave power has been unceasing and persistent in its opposition to liberty—subsidizing to its interests the pulpit and the press of almost the entire country. Submission to one of its behests, became the parent of a numerous progeny of demands, each ambitious, rapacious, inexorable! Its sanctuaries were the dwelling

places of its victims—its altars their hearth-stones, and its sacrifices their life's blood, wrung out by refinements of cruelty, and with inexpressible torture.

In the midst of its empire it set up its idol Moloch, and made reverence for it the price of admission to the blood-stained privileges of its realm. The lash was its stern ukase—the manacle the sacred symbol of its power, while incest and adultery were at once among its means of commerce and the hand-maidens of its pleasures. The deity of its worship was the demon of injustice and oppression, while it exultingly trampled beneath its sacriligious feet the mandates of the God of the universe! Clothed in purple and fine linen, with its haughty brow decked with a diadem dipped in blood, it held forth its golden sceptre, promising the rewards of its empire to those that should become worshipers at its shrine. The psaltary, the harp, the sackbut, and the dulcimer of its programme, were the passions of lust, cupidity, prejudice and ambition; and upon these it played skillfully, drawing myriads to the worship of its unhallowed rites, until, *all over the land*, from rostrum and pulpit—from the gilded halls of mirth—from the place of prayer, and from the couch of the dying, the smoke of its offerings ascended! Boasting itself to be the embodiment of a civilization ordained of God, it assiduously labored to dim the lustre of God's "true light," to chain the human intellect to its chariot wheels, "and shut the gates of mercy on mankind!"

However great the accessions to its power, such was the rapacity of its lust of dominion, that, like the insatiate daughters of the horse-leech, "*Give, Give,*" was its ever-resounding refrain.

When it had instilled its virus into the heart, and placed its incubus upon the brain of almost the entire nation, grown more and still more arrogant by success, it committed a cardinal error against its own being, in that it forsook the forum and assumed the sword! The forum had been the scene of its profoundest triumphs. There, it had been wont to receive the adulations of its worshipers, and the abject submission of its opponents. There, for decades of liberty-throttling years, its northern foremen—with a few *thrice honorable exceptions*—had been used, as a fitting finale to their contests with the blood-loving and tear-bathed Moloch, to fall down in its presence with their hands upon their mouths, and their faces in the dust, and to cry before it, "Unequal and unclean!"

But not content with the "great concessions" made, times almost innumerable, to its rapacity, or freely proffered to its acceptance as a subsidy for its unhallowed support, and fearing that the ancient spirit of liberty inherent in the organic law of the land, and still extant in the great heart of the nation, might survive the ponderous compress under which it had placed her, and shine in her own unbounded splendor, to bless this continent and mankind; and desiring to secure and to perpetuate its own unimpeachable supremacy in

the nation, it threw aside and trampled upon its senatorial robes—assumed the helmet of battle—drew the sword of rebellion—cried “havoc,” and “let slip the dogs of war!”

For four-score years, the American people had gone forward in a career of industrial prosperity relatively unparalleled among the nations of the earth. The wings of their commerce swept every known sea accessible to civilized traffic, and beside the ensigns of all the maritime nations of the earth, the American flag floated, the respected and honored emblem of a nation's greatness. Out on the sounding sea, it had waved from the peak amid the thunder of battle, and when the smoke of the contest lifted, “*the flag was still there,*” the earnest of many hard-gained victories. On the dry land, amid charging squadrons and the deep-mouthed bay of cannon, it had been borne into the fray on many a battle-field; and although war-torn by the enflaming fire of the foe, and stained with the blood of heroes, victory had again and over been domiciled within the temple of her pleasure—upon its crest.

Into the lap of America, the earth, the sea and the heavens poured their selectest treasures, to build her up and make her of the greatest among the nations. But while she was thus prospered, distinguished, and honored, there was rioting in the innermost recesses of the national life, the canker-worm of a great *national sin!* Ignoring God, in her conduct as a nation, she had gone forward in the greatness of her strength, laying iniquity to sin, in her oppression of the poor of the land, *and beyond her borders*, until the national transgression was piled a monstrous mountain of abominations, towering to the skies!

For scores of years, within her boundaries, the cry of the soul—anguish of the oppressed—mothers bereaved of their children—husbands separated from their wives—sons and daughters put to the torture before the sorrowing eyes of their helpless parents—the marriage tie desecrated—the family relation, with all its tender associations, its hallowed influences, ignored—woman robbed of her virtue—the human intellect persistently darkened—the honor of manhood, the dignity of womanhood, insulted and outraged in a thousand ways—the ground opening her mouth to receive the gushing blood from the lacerated, quivering flesh of the innocent—the agonized death-cry of the immolated victims of the great tyranny, wailing upward to the throne of the universe, from out the smoke and ashes of their funeral pyre—the embodiment of all these horrors, and ten thousand more, had been ascending to God, until the ear of mercy was pained, and the “glittering sword” of justice leaping from its scabbard, hung suspended over the favored land! Impartial history will record the poetic justice of the retribution meted out to the foul power that sought, in the spirit of its own philosophy, to perpetuate its existence and extend its authority, by rebelling *against* the pillar that sustained its throne! Blinded by a mistaken

belief in its own invincibility, it ruthlessly unchained the thunder-bolt that was destined to destroy it. It spoke, through the mouths of its cannon, directed against Fort Sumter, its bold defiance to the authority of the nation. Not more brave were the defenders of the celebrated pass of Thermopylæ, than were those courageous few to whom first, in the ushering in of the great American conflict, came the fiery baptism of battle—the garrison of that beleaguered fortress. Succumbing, at length, to the unequal force of seven thousand against seventy men, they yet, in evacuating their stronghold, retained possession of the flag they had so heroically defended—it, glorious, though trailed in the dust—they, invincible even in defeat! At a later day *that flag* waved again over Sumter! Roused by the rattling thunders of artillery, the nation sprang to arms with an earnest avidity, for which history supplies no parallel, presenting to mankind a spectacle of sublime grandeur—the uprising of a great people!

From the mountain and the vale—from the hill-top and the plain—from the anvil and the axe—from the shuttle and the ship—from the cloister and the desk—from the bench and from the bar—from the hamlet and the town—from all life's varied callings, they came, with an almost continuous "tramp, tramp, tramp," at the call of the Executive, to the defence of the Government, ordained by the labors, and consecrated with the blood, the sacred blood of their fathers; and heralding before their advancing standards the supporting response,—

"We are coming Father Abraham,  
Three hundred thousand more!"

Nor did the *Sons* of America alone respond to the call of their country. *Woman*, the central point of generous impulse and *enduring* love, added new leaves of laurel to her glorious bays, during a nation's baptism in a nation's blood!

What praise can be beyond the merit of America's loyal *women* in the hour of America's supremest need! Upon their brows shall history bind true fame's unfading chaplet, and honored shall their memories be by coming generations!

"*They also serve who only wait and hope.*"

The widowed mother with an only son—the hope, the confidence of her declining days—laid that dear son upon the altar of her country and smiled to know she had a son to give.

The devoted sister gave her cherished brother, and dwelt alone in sadness, but in hope.

The fondly clinging wife, gave him, around whom her heart strings closely twined, and shedding o'er the pledges of her love for him, the pearly symbols of the anguish of her soul, yet strong in love of country, liberty and *duty*, she gently bid him go.

The tender girl, with all a maiden's mantling blush upon her, yet in true heroism strong, with a parting kiss that left its impress

on her lover's lips forever, gave *him*, her heart's most cherished idol, and died herself to happiness and hope that liberty might live.

These all deserve well of their country, for freely have they laid upon that country's altar their choicest offerings, and schooled themselves to "suffer and be strong."

It will be within your recollection, fellow countrymen, that such were among the agencies called into vigorous action by the commission of the overt act of treason to the flag. But, neither Government nor people seemed to comprehend the plainly written lesson of the hour. By acts too historic to be questioned, they demonstrated their willingness to make, for the salvation of the country, every sacrifice, save one,—and that the indispensable condition of safety,—the sacrifice of *wrong* upon the altar of *right*.

Desiring simply to restore the original *status* of the States, they were unwilling to lay the axe at the foot of the tree of the national evil, to strike home upon the arrogant monster who had, without cause, inaugurated war upon the ancient *regime*, that it might overthrow the Government of the people, and build upon its ruins an oligarchy, the chief corner stone of which should be human slavery, while *lust*, *cupidity* and *prejudice*—a most unhallowed triumvirate—should form the fitting key stone to the principal arch of the infernal structure. But when the lengthened contest assumed proportions almost infinitely more vast than had been conceived probable, or even possible, on the part of either contestant, when the dark shadow cast by the wing of the angel of death had rested upon half the households in the land, the Government and people, realizing, through the implacable logic of events, that, in seeking conjointly to crush the slaveholders' rebellion, and rivet the shackles still more firmly on the enslaved portion of the American people, they were simply assisting in the creation of a vortex in which their own liberties would assuredly be engulfed, measurably gave up their idle purpose, and sought to assume a policy based upon common sense, and supported by common justice.

As the initial, and yet cardinal, act of that policy, the President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, of happy memory, proclaimed to a large proportion of the chattel bondmen of America, BE FREE! Nor was that clarion note of the Executive an edict of emancipation to these alone. It was the herald of freedom to all those communities and men who were subordinate to the requirements of the so-called "peculiar institution."

It was the master key to unpadlock the lips of "the American Tract Society,"—lips closed in the fear of man, from uttering bold denunciations in the fear of God, against the prime iniquity of the nation.

It was the lever, designed and calculated to heave from its base, the cause that made an acre of land in North Carolina of less pecuniary value than the same superficial extent of soil in Pennsylvania.

It was a measure calculated to restore to labor the acknowledgment of its true dignity, by the dethronement of a power that had placed its "mudsill" brand of degradation upon it, while itself reaped in a stolen opulence that gave to it a fictitious respectability.

It was within the competency of its scope to increase the defensive power of the Republic by eliminating its principal element of weakness,—to uplift the literature, enlarge the culture, and improve the morals of the entire country. Not only did it bid the enslaved *be free*, but it solemnly pledged the faith of the Government, and thereby the honor of the nation, to "maintain the freedom of such persons."

Shall the sacred honor of the nation, plighted amid the rattle of musketry, the clash of sabres, the loud-mouthed bay of cannon, "the thunder of the captains, and the shouting," "and garments rolled in blood," be "maintained" under the peace which the war has purchased, in its letter and in its spirit?

Fellow citizens, for your answer to the solemn interrogatory here propounded, universal humanity pauses!

The Baltimore Platform, upon which the second election of Mr. Lincoln to the Presidency occurred, not only re-affirmed the abolishment of slavery within the United States, but boldly pronounced for its "*extirpation*" from the soil of the country.

Following the issuance of the great proclamation—the fundamental act in the redemption of the country from the crimson record of the past America—came the enlistment of colored men as soldiers of Republic. Through the diabolism, pure and simple, of American prejudice, they had been deemed not only unfit to be defended by the flag (purchased as well with the blood of their forefathers as that of other men), but also unworthy to bare their bosoms to the iron-hail of the opposing power, in that flag's defence, and die for it and liberty, as died *vainly* many of their forefathers on revolutionary and other battle-fields.

But there came an hour in which the voice of the government, in accents invitatory, went forth to them, saying: "*Your country's in danger, and calls for you now.*" And nobly did they respond. Two hundred thousand of them went forth, and stood in armed defence of the cradles, the hearthstones, and the hearts of the people of the United States. They did this that the Republic might not perish, and that liberty might live. Impartial and inevitable history will lend a haloed leaf to the record of the great fact that, mightiest among the mighty changes wrought by the great conflict of principles, producing the clash of gigantic armies in America, a people "robbed and peeled" arose from the dust, and on fields of blood and carnage, already as imperishable as Thermopylæ, and Marengo, and Austerlitz, and Flodden Field, and Pharsalia, and Yorktown, sustained, amid the collision of arms, their long derided assertion of their God-given manhood. Many of these brave soldiers of the

Republic—falling with their feet to the foe, battling beneath the banner of their country—sleep now their last sleep on the gory plains of war, with no stone raised to mark their crimson sepulchre; yet shall the muse of history, weeping above their sacred manes, write them down with honor on her tablets, as among the patriot heroes of Olustee, Fort Wagner, Milliken's Bend, Port Hudson, and many other well fought fields of strife.

Millions of this class of citizens have domicil amid communities whose infidel power they so largely assisted to overthrow. If, being so placed, they be left by the military power of the government, without the protecting shield of *equality of rights before the law*, what must become their *status*? Shall serfdom or peonage succeed to the chattel slavery, out of which, at the fiat of "military necessity," they have been lifted by the national arm? Shall they, from being slaves of individuals, become the slaves of communities—the pariahs of society? To "maintain" their "actual freedom" intact, the faith of the nation stands solemnly pledged.

Sigismund violated his safe conduct—the word of an emperor—and blushing scarlet in the assembly of notables, blushes still in history, and must blush through all coming time! Shall the fullness of blushing become the historic mantle of America, because of her dereliction of duty to any class of her citizens, that in the hour of the common danger, stood forth in the common defence?

The proclamation which proved itself to be no mere *brutum fulmen*, as was affirmed of it, did not make free *all* the chattel slaves within the United States, but the adoption of an important amendment to the organic law of the land did. For, under the plastic hand of circumstances it had become the *rationale* of American liberty, that the perpetuity of her reign required that her safeguards should be enshrined in the constitution itself. Because the war, through the agency of two hundred pounder Parrott guns, armored ships and spherical shot, had been productive of an iron-clad logic, previously unknown to American executive power, American legislation, or American jurisprudence.

It is a part of the usual course of legislation, in the promulgation of a law regarding matters already legislated upon, to make the latest enactment the repealer of all laws and parts of laws inconsistent with itself. The logic of this rule needs no exemplification—it bears its own comment. When the abolishment of American slavery transpired, all laws, ordinances or enactments that had been made in its interests and for its support, fell with the legally defunct tyranny and became extinct—"null and void, and of none effect." Whatever enactment, therefore, has since been formed, *in its spirit* and for its sustainment, has been so formed in contravention of the supreme law of the land—is contumacious and nullifying in its essence, and is of no force or rightful authority with any creature whatever.

But an unenfranchised class, dwelling where public sentiment sanctions such enactments, can, and doubtless will be, as they unquestionably are, made the victims of local legislation, in ways and under circumstances not at all likely to be remedied by the power of the Constitution, imperfectly or insincerely administered. The enfranchisement of this class eliminates this never-sufficiently-to-be-deprecated condition of things, by rendering catholic the benign operation of the organic law of liberty, where every man is made at once its subject and an interested sustainer of it.

State action might, at least partially, accomplish this. But will even that, by all the States, be done? A learned, reverend and venerable American loyalist, at the collapse of the rebellion, declared, that if the enfranchisement of the freedmen should be left to the determination of the States whose slave-power over them had been broken by the war, it would never be effected. Do not all the indications at present observable sustain that view?

The nature of "the government under which we live" is three-fold—executive, legislative, and judicial—each co-ordinate branch of it having its own legitimate sphere of action assigned to it by the fundamental law creating them all.

To take care that the laws are faithfully *executed* is the highest constitutional duty of the chief magistrate; to *decree* laws for the government and protection of the American people, is the proper, legitimate office of the Congress of the United States, and of no other power whatever; while the supreme judicial tribunal exhausts its functions when it has decided upon the constitutionality, or the converse, of any law so made.

The Constitution has made it the duty of the United States to "*guarantee*" to each State a republican form of government. No government, whether State or national, is republican in form or in spirit, in which any portion of its citizens—except for crime or nonage—are denied the exercise of the rights common to the remainder. The subject of suffrage has hitherto been controlled by the several States respectively, and many of them, in controlling it, have excluded from the exercise of the ballot an entire class of American citizens, or have admitted them only upon property, or other physical qualifications, unknown to the Constitution—the supreme law of the land. The power that created this "policy," and sustained its existence, having failed to maintain its own corporeal being on an appeal to the sword, every adumbration of an excuse for its continuance has passed away.

Over the whole subject, we regard the power of Congress as ample; else is the Constitution a nullity, and the Union under it "a rope of sand." But such a conclusion as is involved in the terminus of this proposition is not in any sense tenable, in view of the sea of precious blood, and the billions of treasure so lavishly and so *successfully* expended by the American people for the preservation and



perpetuity of both. It is, then, within the competency of the Constitution-given authority of the Congress of the United States, to "guarantee" to every American citizen the unobstructed exercise of his inherent right "to take part in determining the laws, the magistracies, and the public policies under which he and his children are to live." Principles are deathless entities. "You can not hush up a principle!" Since the formation of the government, that attempt has been made continuously; but principle has lifted her voice in the pulpit, on the hustings, upon the rostrum, at the couch of the dying, and at length in the thunder-clang of battle, while she has written her immortal presence all over the land in characters of blood.

An able pen has written, "No question is ever settled that is not settled right." "Of the questions that came up for settlement by our fathers, those in which they touched principle were settled forever, and they never gibber or flit; but those questions where, instead of touching principle, they only touched the quicksand of expediency, have been all our lives tormenting us. And if there was ever a people that ought to have learned that to touch the ground of principle is safe, and that to come short of that is unsafe, we are that people. So let us not commit another mistake."

Will you, then, seek to re-erect the national structure upon "the quicksand of expediency," when principle lies at your feet, not requiring to be quarried, but full of the fair proportions that follow the application of the line, the level, and the square, and ready to be used for the purpose of building for you and for your posterity "a sure house?"

Loyal men, representing "the South," from the Missouri to the Rio Grande, are giving evidence before the American people of the temper and tendency of the dominant class of the inhabitants of the insurgent section of the land. They tell you that, whoever, during the nation's bloody baptism, stood forth in defence of, or remained firm in allegiance to the *old flag*—the assaulted flag of your fathers—is proscribed and rendered unsafe in person and property by the friends and supporters of the unslain spirit of the rebellion—the spirit that invoked the war—that *engineered* its forces against liberty—that *starved*, and slew in cold blood, the imprisoned defenders of the Republic—that, as its crowning act of deepest infamy, *assassinated* our beloved martyr President—and that now, though disembodied, lives, *vigorously lives*, and is couchant only where restrained by the military arm of the nation, and rampant wherever that arm is not. They stood by you in the dark and perilous hours of the nation's life; they know the deep diabolism of the power they confront; they know the sure and effectual remedy for the ills they endure; they know your right and your power to apply that remedy, and they come to you and ask, as the deliberate conviction of their judgment, that you give to them an efficient ally, by enfranchising *the colored loyalists of the South*.

They tell you, in words that burn, that the suffering loyal people at the South *need* this support as indispensable to their safety in person and property, and to enable them to stand up like men, and effectually declare, in the face of the actively malicious power of secession and treason, that American constitutional liberty, and the Union of these States, are and *shall be* "*one and inseparable, now and forever!*"

Will you stretch forth the mailed hand of the nation to save them, or shall your friends—the friends of the Union and liberty—be permitted to perish?

"A war of races," (so mis-called, we think, because, believing that there is but *one* race of mankind, the human race, divided as it is into multiplied families of the earth, but "*made of one blood,*") such a war has been spoken of in high quarters, with no deterring sentence of condemnation upon it. With the spirit of the rebellion still stalking abroad in the land, such utterances might well be expected to bear fruit. Are not the sanguinary occurrences at Memphis and New Orleans their legitimate outgrowth?

Whatever their origin and purpose, the verity remains that neither *executive favor*, nor judicial decisions, nor "*honed lies*" of legislation

"Can blazon evil deeds, or *consecrate a crime!*"

The universe possesses no power that can elevate error into the dignity of right.

"I am a Roman citizen," had once to him who bore the title, a potency of protection in it, greater than that afforded by fleets and armies. Standing beneath the folds of the proud banner of his country, the American citizen should find in it immunity from wrong and violence. But, neither in the memorable occurrence on the banks of the Ogeechee, transpiring in the rear of the magnificent army that, under the leadership of its great captain, through the heart of an enemy's country, victoriously "*marched down to the sea,*" nor yet in the more recent crimson baptisms, accorded to two of the cities of the South, did the flag avail to save the blood of loyal men.

For the shedding of that blood a fearful responsibility *somewhere* vests. Will the nation assume it? These acts are constituent parts of a crime so despicable in its moral turpitude, so appalling in the pure diabolism of its character, that history can have for it no palliation, and mankind no pardon.

Although the idol to which a great nation bowed low to do reverence, performed well its work of corrupting the public conscience, during its supremacy, we do not regard a war with the indicated purpose and RESULT as impending. *We worship an iconoclastic God!*

All adown the pathway of the centuries is the cumulative evidence discoverable, that no people, bowing down before the cross, have ever, by another so worshipping people, been exterminated.

The aboriginal man of America, once the undisputed possessor of this continent, preceding, *by coercion*, the "star of empire" on its westward way, stands now upon the Pacific slope, his footsole almost laved by the waters of that great sea.

Acknowledging the God of the universe, beside the council fire in the wilderness, and on the war path red with the blood of the slain,—in the star that shimmerd its light upon his meandering rivulets, and in the storm-cloud charged with the thunderbolt, the God of revelation was to him as to the ancient worshippers on Areopagus, "THE UNKNOWN GOD." Scorning to adopt the civilization that grew up and became dominant around him, he did not "*kiss the Son*." His shrine was the shrine of the universe, but at the altar of revelation, he bent not the suppliant knee. And now the light of his camp fires is paling before the advancing beacons of civilization, and ere a few decades of years shall have grown hoary, the last of the primeval children of America will have sunk to rest beneath the clods of the soil, that once owned the sway of his ancestors, or within the bosom of the deep and calm Pacific, with all its wide expanse to form his mighty mausoleum.

But though the track of his moccasin cease from the continent—though his war-path be replaced by the railway—though on the site of his wigwam shall arise the mansion palatial, and though he "perish from the way," yet shall the memory of America's child of the forest, long linger in the land that was his,

"For his name is on your waters,  
And ye can not wash it out!"

But, as Simon the Cyrenian bore the burden of the Great Prophet, when he was weak and had thrice fallen, up to the very apex of the hill of atonement, laying down his encumbrance only where the standard of redemption was set up, so has the Africo-American, during all the two centuries of his thralldom on this continent, borne the weight of the "throne of iniquity," and found his only refuge at the foot of the cross of the crucified! Surely, fellow-citizens, not even they that "sat down by the waters of Babylon," and wept when they remembered Zion, had the poisoned chalice so preferred to their lips, whose, bitter contents, we, for two hundred years, have quaffed. And yet, we number five million souls! *We worship an iconocastic God—we, as a people, bow down before the Cross!*

During the war, a purpose briefly existed, of virtually ostracising an entire class of Americans, "native and to the manor born," as a means of placating the unappeasable spirit, that at the moment was endeavoring, with fire and sword, to fulfill its long-cherished purpose to "rend the Union, from turret to foundation," that upon the *debris* of the government framed by Washington and the fathers, and consecrated with the blood, and tears, and prayers of the American people of "the times that tried men's souls," a government should be erected, having for its chief corner stone, a political class

distinction, subversive of the rights of, and degrading to universal humanity. The policy of their deportation finds now but few defenders, and no philosophic demonstrator. Its reenactment would be, not the, perhaps, excusable farce of a first attempt, but a stupendous, inextenuable, tragic crime! "Indissolubly connected with the great body of the American people, we possess with it a common destiny. Our record in the past, we think, warrants the belief, that, with it, we will be found willing to do, to dare, to suffer, and if need be, to die, in defense of American constitutional liberty for the *entire* American people." We are fully aware that the devotion to the flag, every where observable among us, is scarcely explicable to foreign peoples, and far too little understood by the majority of our own countrymen. An excerpt of a letter, written immediately after the receipt of the earliest intelligence of the battle of Shiloh Church, by a young man from among us, may serve to make that plain, and place us rightly upon record as having a reason for the faith that is in us:

"An American by birth, by residence, and in feeling, I love my country, and I love her flag.

" 'Lives there the man with soul so dead  
That never to himself has said,  
This is my own—my native land?'

"In every foreign port where I have seen it, and on the bosom of the wide, wide sea, I have greeted it with a feeling of affection that I may not undertake to describe. I knew—with *unutterable pain* I knew—that its bright stars and broad stripes had covered and protected the horrors of the 'middle passage'. I knew that while it flaunted in proud beauty from the dome of the capitol at Washington, the seat of the government of my country, 'the model republic,' all around it, and protected by it, were the shambles of the traffickers in human blood, and tears, and sighs, and groans! In blood that would have sufficed in quantity to have changed to crimson all the raiment of all the chief executives of my country's government, since its formation. In tears sufficient in multitude to have filled to overflowing the brazen sea of the first temple. In sighs that for decades of years had pained the ears of mercy. In groans that for generations had been ascending as one great, embodied prayer of misery, to heaven, and with the earnestness of desperation, laying hold on the thrones of the Trinity! All this, and *more*, I knew, and knowing, loved that flag! I loved it because it was the symbol and the outgrowth of the great democratic idea of the natural equality of man. I loved it because beneath its ægis there was an evident vestige of the primitive rights of man. I loved it because, upon the waters of every sea, it held an independent position beside the ensigns of all the maritime nations of the earth. I loved it because it was the symbol of my country's greatness. I loved it for contests waged and victories won beneath its ample folds. I loved it because, while I knew that bitter things were

written against it on earth and in heaven, I yet hoped for the day of its *perfect purification* from them all; for the day when, in the strength and glory of its new birth, it should say to cupidity—to lust—to avarice—to prejudice—‘What have I to do any more with idols?’ I loved it, while I believed that for it to reach the high goal of the hopes of mankind, it must pass through an ordeal of fire. Has not the hour of that ordeal dawned upon us? On the Potomac—on the ‘sacred soil’ of Virginia—in Missouri—in Arkansas—in Tennessee—in Kentucky—in the Carolinas—along the banks of ‘the Father Waters’—shakes not the earth beneath the tread of martial men? And in how many places is not the sound of the groans of the poor slave—convicted of no crime, attainted of no treason—replaced by the sharp crack of the rifle, the rattle of musketry, the clash of sabres, and the booming bass of artillery?

“And in this great conflict, this deadly ‘wreck of matter,’ the old flag is borne upward and onward to the re-achievement of its rightful heritage by the stalwart arms and courageous hearts of its heroic defenders. Surely, to-day, amid its glorious victories, it is receiving its solemn baptism of fire and of blood!”

And thus we loved and love the flag.

Mr. Alexander H. Stephens, on being inducted into the secondary position upon “the throne of iniquity” declared the new “government” of which he was a pillar, to be *reformatory* in its character. But, if it be true that great reforms never move backward, it must be admitted that the armed insurrection of American slavery was not a reform, but a retrogression; evolving, however, out its very necessities, a true reform, of an *animus* deeply and implacably antagonistic to itself.

*It* sought to unwrite the superscription of the Almighty upon humanity. To-day, the reform which it has engendered is re-uniting manhood on man. *It* sought to account the prayers, the tears, the trials, and the love of civil and religious liberty of the Pilgrim Fathers unholy; and to blot out “Plymouth Rock” from the sacred remembrance of Americans. But to-day, from an hundred battlefields, the bleaching bones of the honored sons of the “Mayflower’s” ocean wanderers speak in thunder tones to the surviving descendants of the Puritans, to contend earnestly in the spirit of their progenitors, for that which the forefathers sought and found—“Freedom to worship God!” *It* sought to undeclare the most noble utterances of 1776, the foundation-stone of American liberty, and American nationality. But to day, these sentiments, haloed in fire, and a thousand-fold intensified by their baptism in a nation’s blood, are far more than in the hour when the continent of America became vocal with them, and distant thrones of power trembled before them, cherished in ten thousands of bosoms, by whom they are accounted as among the eternal verities!

People of America! in virtue of the sacred blood of the slain of

an hundred battle-fields, and of the noble naval heroes that have sunk to their last sleep beneath the engulfing waves, that the country and liberty might not perish—in justice to the honored army of living witnesses, who bared their bosoms to the foeman's steel, that freedom might not die, and in the name of all who have suffered, and hoped, and striven for the redemption of the land, we ask you if this reform shall not be made perfect by being advanced to its legitimate, logical conclusion?

The present is peculiarly an age of IDEAS. The invention of the Telegraph—perhaps the grandest achievement of uninspired humanity, rimming the chariot-wheels of science with the fire of heaven's artillery—the improvements in fire-arms—new and superior modes of warfare, offensive and defensive—greatly advanced educatorial appliances—the dissemination in many languages of the world's great civilizer and purifier, the Holy Scriptures—the prosecution of the honored labors of the husbandman, upon principles elaborated in the studio of the philosopher—new and important combinations in the uses of steam, the great motor of the age—the ever-advancing and indispensable railway enterprize of the world—the tunneling of mountains—the bridging of rivers; all these, and more than are mentionable, are but so many multiplied evidences of the birth and growth of ideas—the expansion of mind, the liberal unfolding of humanity's intellectual power. And amid them all, there stands prominently forth—colossal, majestic, commanding—the grand idea—solemn, sublime, immortal, of the inherent right of man to self-government! That idea is stronger far to-day on this continent, and throughout Christendom, than in any previous era of the world's history.

The institutions of the old world, founded upon a political class distinction in society, are being eliminated by the progress of liberal ideas, and by the sword. The Austrian Hapsburg power—the power that could create and sustain a ~~Redetsky~~ the woman-whipper of Hungary—has been made to quail before the house of Loraine; and through the liberalizing ideas promulged by the Prussian needle-gun, Bismarck makes his mark upon the century.

Italy—classic ground forever—possesses now the citadel of the strength of her hereditary foe, the celebrated Quadrilateral,—the name of Garibaldi and freedom are as ever synonymous, and as ever honored, while Victor Emmanuel is King of an almost universally united Italy.

In England, the mother-land, the popular cry is for “a redistribution of seats,” an enlargement of the suffrage. The sturdy yeomanry of Britain, the stay and the staff of the throne of that noble woman, England's widowed Queen, demand that their voices shall be heard, and their rights and influence acknowledged in her Majesty's Government of the realm.

In the far north, despotic Russia, through the courage, intel-

*Hamman*

ligence and patriotism of her liberal-minded Czar, has loosed the bonds of serfdom, and elevated manacled millions of the human race into the beauty, strength and dignity of unfettered manhood.

Spain is looking forward to an early cleansing of the crown of Castile from the foulest blot upon its jewelled disc; and even the Island of Sumatra has decreed its atmosphere too pure to be breathed by a single chattel bondman.

Fellow countrymen! Shall America, the youngest born of the nations, in which man is put on trial as to his ability to govern himself,—shall America, the land of Bibles, of free speech and a free press,—shall America, whose every enfranchised citizen is a sovereign in his own right,—shall *she* require to learn a single lesson in human liberty from governments built upon, and peoples imbued with, the idea of “the divine right of Kings to govern wrong?”

It is the distinguishing characteristic of the highest attained human governmental development—the American Republic—that the common people are not only “the power behind the throne,” but the pillars and possessors of the throne itself. And, as if resulting from its reflex influence upon senior nationalities, the importance of *the people as the true source of power*, is being almost every where acknowledged.

“Talk not to me of the State,” in a former period, said the monarch of France, “I, Louis the ~~XV~~, am the State.”

In a recent speech at Montbrison, France, the Duc de Persigny, speaking through the populace to the Emperor, bids him “Onward King of the people!” X 1

Whatever may be the political significance of such an utterance at the present period, by the distinguished relative of the astute Emperor of the French, it seems to be within the compass of human comprehension that the time approximates in which the popular cry of disenthralled nationalities will be “*Onward, liberty of the people! Liberty is King!*”

Christian people! The retrospect of the great contest adduces the painful fact that, throughout the desperate conflict of immortal truth with perishing error, the wide extended diabolusian war, the church has been *led*, and not *leading*, as is her high prerogative, and her bounden *duty*.

For, however swift, sure and comprehensive, may be the march of civilization, should not *the human development of the mind of Christ* be unapproachably in advance of it, preparing the highways for its passage, and illumining them, not with the transient glare of the meteor, however brilliant, but with the steady radiance of the fixed constellation, a light as unerring and glorious as the resplendent birth star of “the Prince of the House of David?”

Is not this the day, is not this the hour, in which the American church, and the American State, each in its own order, should labor *with the single-heartedness of christians, and the candor and fervor of patriots that*

GOD, JUSTICE AND HUMANITY,

shall be the sure base-work upon which the restored and regenerated Union shall rest?

The vestiges of the Dictatorships of the world do not prove them to have been peculiarly favorable to the existence and increase of popular liberty. The people of Rome had once the popular boast of Roman citizenship. But under the second Dictatorship of Julius Cæsar, nineteen hundred years ago, that people had so far lost the ancient Roman lore of liberty, that their popular cry, their highest aspiration, was "*panem et circenses*—bread and public shows." Such a people might well be held the vassals of the ambition of a bold, aspiring man, *already possessed of place and power*. Under similar circumstances other nations might exhibit a similar degeneracy.

What the near future holds in reserve for *our* country can not now be divined. The elective pronouncement of the people may create a Congress equal to the requirements of the crisis.

But cis-Atlantic lovers of their country and of constitutional liberty, will not be unmindful, in view of what is transpiring immediately around us, of the trans-Atlantic *coup de état* of the second of December. We are no alarmists, but the public danger, though lessened is not destroyed.

'Twere well the vanguard of liberty should pile high the faggots on the watch-fires of freedom.

Fellow patriots! the history of the human race, the records of the deeds of buried centuries afford incontestable evidence that "unfinished questions have no pity for the repose of mankind."

With all the light derivable from an examination of the line of political knowledge, as developed by the histories of past and present nations of the earth, with all the war-learned lessons of the great conflict between tortuous, punctilious wrong, and simple logical right—lessons carried by cannon to the very lintels of the doors of the citadel of the strength of the American Government, the homes and the hearts of the American people, the way to the possession of a just and ennobling national grandeur and perpetuity, is made possible and plain to you in the sight of all the civilized nationalities and peoples of the earth. The curtain so long veiling the entrance to that way from the moral perception of the nation, has been lifted by the sword, and the dear old flag has entered upon its march to a brighter and better civilization, to the tenor clash of sabers, and the booming bass of artillery.

That which the bullet saved from destruction, is now to be remitted to the ballot for preservation. The contest is, *for the moment*, adjourned from the field to the *forum*! The questions arising out of it, or by which it was created, must now, or in the near future, be met and decided by the honor, patriotism, and statesmanship of the American people, or by the converse of these qualities in them. *Under which dominion shall it be?*



A voice from the tomb of the martyred Lincoln seems now to reach the national ear, saying, "The hour is come in which to enfranchise the colored American people, that they may 'help you keep the jewel of liberty in the family of freedom.'" To the test of man's fitness for self-government, as presented by "the model republic," the oppressed of every clime still fondly look. To cleanse and purify it—to make it a light casting its rays of grandeur and stability far into the dim vista of the future—to essentially aid in the redemption of the nations, from whatever tyrannizes over man—the image of his Maker—is your great work. And in the memorable words of departed excellence and worth, it is within your competency to "meanly lose, or nobly save, the last best hope of the earth!"

Our plea with the nation is based upon no prescriptive rights of complexional hue or of lineage. We plead simply as men with men, for the *restoration* of the exercise of the rights of men. The rights themselves inhere to us and to all men, and are inalienable, but their *exercise* by us, has been obstructed by an undue application, on the part of the majority, of the law of *force*.

We plead with you, that you do not allow "the government of the people, by the people, for the people," to perish from the earth through any imperfect application of the true principles upon which it is founded, in obedience to the behests of a prejudice possessing no element of greatness and no quality of logic competent to commend it to the favorable consideration of God or man.

And now, fellow-citizens, our cause is before you. We believe it to be the cause of our country and of human progress. To God, the universal governor, and to you, we commit it, and ask you to decree by your suffrages, *Equality of rights for all loyal men in America, before the bar of American law!*

R. W. STOKES, *Chairman*, Chicago.

J. B. DAWSON, Chicago.

M. L. RICHARDSON, Mercer County.

GEO. C. FOUNTAIN, Quincy.

JOSEPH H. BARQUETTE, Galesburg.

CHAS. S. JACOBS, Decatur.

E. A. GREEN, Champaign.

On the motion of the Rev. R. DeBaptiste, the Convention elected Mr. John Jones, of Chicago, to be the general agent of the State. On motion of R. DeBaptiste, the following was adopted:

WHEREAS, Dr. P. B. Randolph, who is one of "our men," and a member of the Convention of Loyal Southerners, and one of the Committee from that Convention, who recently went through the country and publicly advocated equal suffrage for the colored people of the United States; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Randolph is now engaged in lecturing through this State, on *the question of the equal rights of all men*, thus aiding this Convention in the *work before it*;

*Resolved*, That we indorse the course of this champion of the rights of man, and bid him and his associate, Mr. A. J. Gordon, God speed in their noble work, and that we will attend in a body his lecture this evening, at half past seven o'clock.

On the motion of L. B. White, a vote of thanks was tendered to the reporter of the associated press, for the able manner in which the proceedings of the convention have been furnished to the public journals.

On the motion of George L. Thomas, a vote of thanks, as an expression of the feelings of the colored citizens of the State, was tendered to John Jones, and all who were associated in the effort for securing the repeal of the "Black Laws" of Illinois.

The following resolution was offered by Mr. Barbour, of Alton. It was referred to the Committee on Resolutions, who reported favorably upon it, and on motion it was adopted.

*Be it resolved*, That this Convention request every delegate to solicit the names of his constituents, and send them to the State Central Committee, with the name of the County, and that the Committee send this document to the legislature of the State of Illinois, as the prayer of so many thousands of her citizens praying for the right of suffrage.

On the motion of Mr. J. H. Barquette, the thanks of the convention were tendered to the President and the remaining officers of the body, for the discharge of the duties belonging to their several stations.

The patriotic hymn commencing with "My country 'tis of thee," was sung by the entire assembly.

On motion, the third State Convention of colored men of Illinois was adjourned without day.

## LIST OF DELEGATES.

G. T. GRAVES, Galesburg, Ill.	GEO. P. MORRIS, Monmouth, Ill.
R. RICHARDSON, " "	P. OUTLAND, " "
CHAS. HELMS, " "	GEORGE PHENYX, " "
C. W. WILLIAMS, " "	A. DOBBIN, " "
J. D. DAVIS, " "	C. C. RICHARDSON, Alton, " "
REV. FAULKNER, " "	C. BARBOUR, " "
J. McGRUDER, " "	M. RICHARDSON, Mercer Co. " "
W. WEBSTER, " "	E. W. LEWIS, Peoria, " "
S. RICHARDSON, " "	W. COLEMAN, Will Co. " "
J. B. TRUSTY, " "	J. W. SMITH, Douglas Co. " "
REV. PATTERSON, " "	R. HOLLY, Bloomington, " "
S. D. WILLIAMS, " "	REV. P. WARD, " "
D. FLETCHER, " "	C. S. JACOBS, Decatur, " "
J. H. BARQUETTE, " "	E. A. GREEN, Champaign City, " "
T. RICHARDSON, " "	GEORGE HENRY, Henry Co., " "
S. PERKINS, " "	REV. B. SMITH, Shawneetown, " "
REV. A. MCGILL, " "	REV. T. STROTHER, Cairo, " "
H. H. HAWKINS, " "	J. B. DAWSON, Chicago, Ill. " "
REV. McSMITH, Galena, " "	E. R. WILLIAMS, " "
G. T. FOUNTAIN, Quincy, " "	J. STANLY, " "
A. PLEASANTS, " "	REV. R. DeBAPTISTE, " "
H. HICKLIN, Springfield, " "	G. L. THOMAS, " "
REV. D. BRENT, " "	L. B. WHITE, " "
A. W. JACKSON, Jacksonville, Ill.	WILLIAM JOHNSON, " "
S. R. SMITH, Knoxville, " "	R. W. STOKES, " "
J. B. SMITH, " "	R. C. WARING, " "
T. STEVENSON, Monmouth, " "	WILLIAM BAKER, " "
R. B. CATLIN, " "	E. HAWKINS, " "

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